

IN THE SPECIFICATION

The paragraph beginning at page 18, line 13 has been amended as follows:

B¹
In the postage meter machine according to Figure 3 the consumable is an ink tank filled with ink. For a different postage meter machine (not shown) that the consumable can be an ink jet print head or a cartridge. The ink jet print head, which has an integrated ink cartridge is thereby likewise referred to as A cartridge@. For example, Siemens type DHP50 is such a disposable print head.

The paragraph beginning at page 25, line 4 has been amended as follows:

B²
A security module 60 serves as first accounting module and has a hardware accounting unit 63 and a battery-supported non-volatile memory 16 into which a credit can be loaded by modem 53. An OTP (One-time programmable) processor 66 thereby implements security routines both in the credit reloading as well as for securing the register data with a MAC (Message authentication code). The advantage of the security module is comprised therein that the check of the dependability and the approval of the inventive franking and posting machine, which is carried out by the mail carrier, is then only required for the appertaining processor system 60 and the connected printer module 55-57. A second processing module is formed by the chip card 10 in combination with the chip card write/read unit 70. The microprocessor 46 and the first memory components 41, 42 then form a third processing module, and the microprocessor 46 and the second memory components 51, 52) broken lines) then form a fourth processing module, etc. As a rule, one accounting module suffices and the other processing modules can assume other tasks. The individual steps of the method for protection against piracy can, for example, be processed in the third processing module.

The paragraph beginning at page 26, line 10 has been amended as follows:

Further sensors and actuators (not explained in greater detail herein) of the base, an encoder 90 ~~for weighing a letter~~ and at least one letter sensor 91 as well as -- via the interface 54 -- at least the modem 53 are electrically connected to the meter 12 of the postage meter machine 1 via the sensor/actuator control interface 58. Both interface circuits 54 and 58 can be realized in an application circuit ASIC. Further details about this can be derived from European Application 716 398. Further details about the control of the other components in the base and in the periphery can be derived from European Application 875 864.